of gas hydrates off the country's east coast in Krishna Godavari, North East Coast, Mahanadi and Anadaman basins;

(b) whether it is also a fact that if mined and brought to atmospheric conditions, they produce 160 times their volume of methane but the technology to mine these hydrates is in its infancy; and

(c) if so, the steps Government proposes to take to adopt latest technology to mine these hydrates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) Prognosticated resource of gas hydrates was estimated at 1894 Trillion Cubic Metre (TCM) based on Bottom Simulating Reflector as seen on seismic line. Under National Gas Hydrate Programme (NGHP), drilling and coring of gas hydrates was carried out in KG basin, Mahanadi basin and Andaman basin.

It is estimated that one cubic metre of gas hydrates may yield about 164 cubic metre of gas at atmospheric condition.

At present there is no technology available in world for commercial production of gas from gas hydrates. Scientific studies are going on to explore the possibility of developing gas hydrates production technique.

Delay in allotment of LPG agencies and petrol pumps

1199. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of LPG agencies and petrol pumps allotted to women and candidates belonging to SC on the basis of reservation during 2001 to December 2007, State-wise and company-wise;

(b) the details of cases when candidates are selected, letters of Intent given, but further no actions are taken, State-wise; and

(c) the reasons for these delays?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported that during the year 2001 to December, 2007, they have allotted 4084 Petrol Pumps (ROs) and 933 LPG distributorships to women candidates. Further, 2642 ROs and 737 LPG distributorships have been allotted to SC candidates in the country.

The State-wise details are available with the Directors (Marketing) of the OMCs concerned.

(b) and (c) OMCs have also reported that during the period 2001 to December 2007, 4004 and 92 Letters of Intent (LOI) for ROs & LPG distributorships respectively are pending for commissioning in the country due to various reasons such as non-availability of land; construction of godown, court cases/complaints, statutory clearances from various authorities, etc.

The State-wise details are available with the Directors (Marketing) of the OMCs concerned.